

Don't Go Swimming With The Fishes

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Category: IT (2017), IT - Stephen King

Genre: Alternate Universe - Modern Setting, Gen, I saw a prompt and thought of the Losers, Richie is a walking disaster, everyone is happy, i honestly don't know what this is, they can't take him anywhere, they're just kids having fun

Language: English

Characters: Ben Hanscom, Beverly Marsh, Bill Denbrough, Eddie Kaspbrak, Georgie Denbrough, Mike Hanlon, Richie Tozier, Stanley Uris

Status: Completed

Published: 2017-10-10

Updated: 2017-10-10

Packaged: 2020-01-26 12:46:17

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,173

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

The Loser Club + Georgie visit a zoo and Richie doesn't know how to behave in public

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Author's Note:

I saw this prompt on tumblr: "Your OTP going to the aquarium. Person B looks away for two seconds, hears a splash, and then turns to find that Person A has fallen into the touch pool whilst trying to pet a manta ray." and thought of Richie.

These kids deserve all the happiness they can get, so does Georgie.

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„They have an aviary“, Stan said excitedly as he studied the map of the zoo, they had been given at the entrance.

“I’m not here to see fucking birds”, Richie said. “I want to see lions or tigers.”

Stan looked back at the map, then folded it up and put it in his back pocket. “They don’t have those.”

“What?!” Richie rounded on Beverly, who smiled innocently at him. “You promised they’d have lions.”

“Because you wouldn’t have come other wise and we wanted it to be a group outing”, she said.

“I wouldn’t have minded if Richie had stayed home”, Stan said.

The group had taken a bus to the nearest city with a zoo, but it had taken them weeks to settle for a destination. Richie had wanted to go to a theme park, Mike and Ben wanted to go the natural history museum, Bev wanted to try an escape room. In the end, they’d decided on the zoo, mostly because Bill had promised his parents to take Georgie along and what did little kids love more than animals. Maybe the circus, but because of Richie’s fear of clowns that hadn’t been an option.

"I want to go in there!", Georgie exclaimed and pointed at the nearest building. Without waiting for an answer the little boy ran towards it and the Losers had no other choice but to follow him.

It turned out to be the aquarium. Not big, but there were a few dozen colourful fishes in tanks lining the wall, there was a big touch pool with manta rays, crabs and sea stars and there was a huge tank at the back of the place with small sharks and other big fish, which was where Georgie was headed.

"Look, Bill! It's a whale!"

Bill grinned. "That's a sh-sh-shark, idiot. A t-t-tiny one at th-that."

"A blacktip shark", Ben said, reading from the sign posted underneath the tank.

"Do they eat people?", Georgie asked, looking up at the swimming shark doubtfully.

"Only bite-sized people", Richie said. "He could probably swallow you in one gulp. You're a midget."

Georgie poked his tongue out at him. "I'm a child. I'm still growing."

"Not if the shark eats you first." Richie ruffled his hair and wandered off.

They all loved Georgie, but while Bev, Ben and Mike kind of doted on him, Richie only showed his affection for the boy by not swearing as much around him. But maybe that was just because Bill would punch him in the shoulder every time he so much as thought of a Your Mom joke around Georgie.

Bill picked Georgie up and set him on his shoulders, so his brother could see better and make faces at the fish as they swam past him. Beverly watched him open and close his mouth in imitation for a moment before she joined in, giggling the whole time.

"You look dumb", Eddie said. He laughed and pulled out his phone as the other Losers started to communicate with the fishes too and recorded their stupid antics. The video ended with all of them

bursting out laughing and the other visitors giving them dirty looks.

“What did the fish tell you, Georgie?” Stan asked. He was always a bit unsure how to treat the six-year-old and usually ended up treating him more like a baby.

“Fish don’t talk, Stan”, Georgie told him, rolling his eyes.

“They t-t-talked to me”, Bill said, pulling Stan closer and whispered in his ear. “Th-they s-s-say you’re a lo-lo-loser.”

Stan shoved him playfully. “Yeah, we all are.”

They were about to move on to the next tank, when a loud splash made everyone turn around. Someone had fallen into the touch pool. Probably a kid, whose parents had left them unsupervised, who thought the pool was there to go swimming with the funny looking fishes. Only the person in the water was too big to be an unattended toddler.

“What kind of idiot is that?”, Stan asked as they stepped closer, joining the group of people that had already gathered around the touch pool.

Dripping wet, staring back at them was of course Richie. He pushed his hair out of his face, blinked and fumbled in the water until he found his glasses and put them back on his nose.

“That’s our idiot”, Mike sighed.

“Maybe nobody saw us come in with him”, Eddie said, slowly backing away. “Let’s just sneak out.”

They all started slowly walking towards the door, but had only taken a few steps when Richie called out to them. “Guys! Look at this huge pancake fish!”

The loud gasps from the other people made them almost not want to look back, and sure enough, as they turned around, Richie was holding one of the biggest manta rays over his head. He had trouble balancing it and the next moment, the fish fell on his head and thankfully back into the water. Eddie hid his face in his hands, not

wanting to be associated with that kind of behavior. Stan and Ben had turned a bright red. Mike stared at Richie while shaking his head. Bill looked about ready to murder Richie and if it hadn't been for Georgie holding his hand, he might have done it. Beverly was the only one who smiled at the other visitors, then walked towards Richie.

"I'm so sorry", she said in the sweetest voice she could muster. "This is our friend, he is... *special*. Unfortunately he has the habit of running away, but I'll make sure to put him back on his leash." The last few words she pressed out through clenched teeth, seeing as Richie still hadn't moved to get out of the damn touch pool.

"Leash?", Richie said. "Kinky, Bev!"

"You get out of the fucking water. Now!", she hissed and grabbed him by the ear, pulling hard until he moved his ass.

Of course after that they were escorted out of the zoo, none of them saying a word, Richie leaving small puddles of water every other step.

As they waited at the bus stop, Mike muttered something under his breath that sounded like "Can't take you anywhere."

"I vote we go without Richie next time", Eddie said.

"Eds!", Richie whined.

"I second that", Stan said. "Although I do like Bev's idea with the leash."

"Course you're into that shit, Stanley." Richie nudged him with his elbow, leaving a wet stain on Stan's shirt.

The tension was broken when Bill started to laugh, closely followed by Georgie, who didn't know why Bill was laughing but copied everything he did anyway. "I c-c-c-c-can't believe you picked that f-f-fish up!"

"Pancake fish", Mike said and joined the laughter. "There's no such thing as a pancake fish, asshole!"

“Did you see it? That was a pancake-looking fish if ever I’ve seen one”, Richie said. “Didn’t feel like one though. Slimy on one side, sandpaper on the other.”

“Something you would’ve known without going swimming with them”, Mike said.

“For fucks sake, I tripped! I swear!”